

Guardian by OTTSTF

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: F/M

Language: English

Characters: Eleven | Jane Hopper, Karen Wheeler, Mike Wheeler

Relationships: Eleven | Jane Hopper/Mike Wheeler

Status: Completed

Published: 2018-08-24

Updated: 2018-08-24

Packaged: 2022-04-23 02:29:11

Rating: General Audiences

Warnings: No Archive Warnings Apply

Chapters: 1

Words: 1,899

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

Protecting Mike at all costs comes with a risk of its own.

Plenty of fluff and family feels because I'm trash for happiness.

Guardian

Author's Note:

01:30? Less than five hours sleep so that I can finish off a fic?
YEP.

I am so stupid.

The Wheeler's house became a common place for El to spend her days once she was allowed out. Hopper hadn't wanted to keep her locked up for very long, so shortly after a month of continued isolation, he'd asked Mike to ask his parents on his behalf if they could look after his new daughter. Of course, they'd come up with a reason for Mike to know her in the first place; something along the lines of him offering to tutor her in areas she needed to catch up on in order to join school as soon as possible.

Mike of course immediately agreed. He'd practically burst through the door that night to rush to his mother – although his father has been trying harder recently to pay more attention to his kids, he's still finding it difficult to balance life, work, and them.

After a talk with the chief and getting to know El (*Jane*), Karen found herself accepting his request happily. From then on, more often than not, El would be in the Wheeler's house from morning until Hopper came to pick her up whenever he'd finish work.

Mike, of course, was loving it. He got to see El nearly every single day, including weekends, and got to teach her everything he could to aid her in catching up with them (with the help of others, too, including Nancy, Jonathan, and even Steve, as crazy as that may seem.

Things had been excellent, right up until this point.

They're sat on the sofa, in the living room. Ted, thankfully, is out on

a business trip, and therefore doesn't have to be included in this rather unfortunate conversation.

What happened, you ask?

Well. Something along the lines of Mike's bike wheel getting caught on the sidewalk as he'd attempted to take an odd angle onto it. This led to him falling sideways, and, had El not been watching through the window, he would've hit the floor at quite a violent speed. But instead, he found himself floating for a moment, mere inches above the ground.

After gaining his senses, and realising what was going on, he'd put his feet and hands below him onto the ground, allowing El to release her hold on him. At which point, he'd glanced around furiously, expecting to find an endless amount of people staring at him, wondering how the *Wheeler Boy* had managed to keep himself floating above the ground for multiple seconds.

To his disbelief, nobody was there to see it. Counting his lucky stars, he quickly grabbed his bike from the floor and rushed around the back of his house.

"Mike? Are you okay?" she asks running down the basement stairs, stopping just short of running straight into him.

"Yeah, El. Thanks for catching me." he responds. "But you *shouldn't* have done that." he reminds her seriously. "So many people could've seen that out there. All it takes is one person, El. One person and-"

"And I'm stuck in hiding again. I know, Mike." she completes for him.

"Well, why did you do it?" he asks, serious but not angry, which she can see in the way he looks at her.

"I can't help it." she tells him honestly. "I didn't think about myself. I just saw you in danger, so I had to save you."

"El, everyone falls off their bike some time. I have before. It wouldn't have been *too* bad." he assures her, smiling as he does.

“Can’t be sure.” she says. “Didn’t want to let it happen.”

He sighs, dropping his defence, finally giving her their daily *hello* kiss, consisting of a short peck, before pulling her into a hug. “Thanks, El.”

“You don’t need to thank me.” she replies, propping her head onto his shoulder (which is getting harder to do by the day, with how much he’s growing).

“At least nobody saw it.” he sighs gratefully.

“I wouldn’t say *nobody*.” a new voice breaks their embrace apart, emerging from the top of the basement stairs.

Looking in that direction in a burst of panic, they find Nancy, with their mother alongside.

Mike processes her words for a moment, before realising what this means. His mother saw him, outside, floating, and, assuming they’ve been listening to this entire conversation, now know that it’s El that did it for him.

Coming to this realisation, his shoulders remain tense as he and El look each-other directly in the eyes; their mutual panic bouncing between them.

Only one word came to his mind, and he lets it slip:
“Shit.”

And so that’s how they ended up here. On the sofa, side-by-side, clutching each-other’s hand tight as they await the outburst from Karen that they’re sure is incoming.

“... How?”

Of all the first words, this is *not* what Mike had expected from his mother. Fair enough; she’d just saw him floating above the ground, mere inches away from hitting it hard, and apparently it was El, a girl who she’d been looking after for just over a month, who had held

him up. *From inside the house.*

They glance at each-other, confused. *How... what?*

"I... don't know." El figures is an appropriate response. The hesitation in her voice breaks Mike's heart; she's very clearly petrified of what could follow from this.

"What do you mean, *you don't know?*" Karen questions. Whilst her voice did pick up int hat, as if accusing her of lying, she too sounds very curious. Mike's not sure how to react as of yet.

"How I can do it." El responds. "I don't know."

"What, so... you just think it, and it happens?"

"*Mom.*" Mike attempts to stop her questioning, but El squeezes his hand, turning her head to him.

"It's okay, Mike." she tells him, smiling to reassure him. Sighing, he nods.

"It's... just like using a hand. It's just something I can do."

Karen visibly takes this information in, clearly trying to work out *how* any of this makes sense.

"Have... have you *always* been able to do that?"

"It was hard, first. Like... like riding a bike." she says, glancing to Mike with a beaming smile, as she recalls him teaching her over the month. "It's hard, doesn't make sense, until you suddenly get it. Then you never forget."

Karen nods her head, understanding that terminology perfectly.

"Does anybody know? Other than us?"

"I hope not." Mike automatically answers.

El nods slightly, before answering the question.

"Our friends, Hop, Mrs. Byers, Jonathan, Nancy, Steve..."

"And I'm only just finding out now?" Karen glares at her son.

"The less people that know, the better!" Mike defends.

"Of course, Michael, but I'm your *mother*! I *need* to know these things!" she insists. "Especially when this girl with superpowers is my son's *girlfriend*."

"Girlfriend?" Mike questions, feeling his cheeks reacting immediately. "Mom, I-

"No more lies, Mike, *please*." his mother cuts him off. "We both saw the way you two kissed earlier. That isn't something *just friends* do."

He sighs, ducking his head. It's *his* fault his mother now knows so much. He shouldn't have been stupid with his bike. He should've checked the stairs before kissing her.

"How long have you known Jane, Mike?" his mother suddenly asks. "I'm not buying the whole 'tutoring for a few months' story any more."

He sighs again, looking to El. She knows, just from the look in his eyes, that he's asking for permission to go on. She nods, knowing it's the best thing to do at this point.

"Since Will went missing." he admits.

"Mich-A year?" she questions, shocked. "You've known Jane for over a year?"

Mike just nods his head, not knowing where to go from this point.

"Michael." his mother suddenly sounds a *lot* more serious. His head suddenly snaps to his mother, whether he likes it or not.

"Now, I want the truth, okay?"

"What truth? Everything I've told you is true." he insists.

"No, my next question." Karen clarifies.

"Go on..." Mike worries.

"The people, last year, who came looking for the girl with a shaved

head...”

El visibly tenses beside him, as does Mike. That is all the answer Karen needs.

“Oh, darling.” she climbs from her seat, now moving beside El. “If I had ever known, I never would’ve let them into this house.” she declares. “I’m so sorry.”

“It’s okay.” El smiles to the woman, feeling so overwhelmed that Mike’s mother feels this way about her.

“No, Jane, it’s not okay.” the woman insists. “I’ve just seen with my own eyes how protective you are of my Michael, but those people wanted to tell us that you’re dangerous? That you’re a risk to be around?”

Karen lets her new-found hate for those people show through her facial expressions. That suddenly vanishes as she turns to her son, who’s watching them both happily. Her face turns to a frown, with a sign of guilt.

“Now I understand why you were so upset all last year...” she says, and Mike doesn’t know how to react. The woman suddenly pulls her son into a hug, “I’m sorry, I’m so sorry, Michael.”

“Mom, mom, it’s okay.” he insists, gently wiggling out of her grasp, shortly succeeding.

“All that matters is that she’s here now. She’s safe, and we’re together. I couldn’t be happier.”

Karen smiles wide at his words.

“I’ll do everything I can to be sure it stays that way.” she promises.

“If she wants to be protective of my boy, risking her own safety for him, I’m damn well going to be protective of her.”

They both smile wide, once again squeezing each-other’s hands in delight.

“There’s a reason I’m so protective over him, Mrs. Wheeler.” El tells the woman, surprising Mike.

“Why is that, darling?” Karen asks.

“Because ever since the day Mike found me, and saved me, helped me and protected me... ever since then, I’ve known. I’ve always loved Mike.”

Karen’s smile widens infinitely hearing that word from her about her son. “Darling, thank you.” she places a loving kiss onto El’s cheek, before rising to her feet. “You’re safe here, I promise.” And with that, she walks on to the kitchen.

Beside her, Mike is staring into nothingness. He doesn’t hear anything or anyone, until El shakes him out of his shock.
“Mike?”

His eyes lock with hers. And his eyes look close to tears.
“You... you said *love*.” he reminds her.
“From... the day we met?”

“The second you gave me your coat, Mike. I may not have known or understood the feeling, but it’s always been there since that day.”

Taking in her words, Mike lets instinct take over. In a heartbeat, their lips are connected again. So much emotion communicates through this, he truly wants her to know that what he’s about to say is the absolute truth.

“El, I’ve *like-liked* you since you showed me that Will was still alive. Even though I was so angry and didn’t want to talk to you, you still kept on, and you found him, and I could never talk you enough. Then you disappeared and... *that* is when I realised I I love you.”

Her smile grows, so big that it hurts. With that, she sighs, and finds herself pulling Mike in for a tight hug.

“I love you, El.” he tells her as they hold each-other.

“I love you too, Mike.” she promises.
“Forever.”

Author's Note:

Feedback? Maybe if I beg?

Love you all ♥